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ABSTRACT

To identify the repertoire and the selection of negotiation strategies of children in natural settings, the interactions of 34 elementary school students in classrooms and playgrounds were recorded by two observers who focused on each child for about 3 hours. Children observed and interviewed were in grades 4 and 6 and approximately 10 and 12 years of age, respectively. An interaction was deemed a "negotiation" if conflict emerged between at least two children and led to a controversy actively carried on by dissenting parties. More than 200 interactions in each age group were categorized as negotiations. Domains of negotiations were found to be distinguishable by the negotiability of the problem at issue. Negotiation strategies differed with regard to the kind of communication, display of emotions, means used to influence the other's behavior, and style. A negotiation strategy's potential for creating an "ideal" situation in which participants could reasonably exchange views depended on which pattern it followed. The three patterns were those of coercion and manipulation, offer and reply, and reasoning. Pattern use varied by age, with the pattern of reasoning seldom observed at either age. Children differed according to their participation, repertoire, and the patterns of strategies they applied. They did not always select strategies fitting the domain of negotiation. Friends tended to use strategies differing from those used by non-friends. (RH)

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NEGOTIATION STRATEGIES IN PEER CONFLICTS: A FOLLOW-UP STUDY IN NATURAL SETTINGS

by

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Negotiation strategies in peer conflicts: A follow-up study in natural settings

by

Lothar Krappmann and Hans Oswald

1. Problem

In the core of children's interactions among themselves is negotiation. This is implied in Piaget's well known statement that the structure of social interactions among peers differs from the structure of interactions between adult and child. While the child subordinates himself or herself from love or fear to the expectations of the parents the interactions between child and child are less dominated from one side and, therefore, more open to the perspectives of both partners who both ask for consideration (J. Piaget 1923). At least, the idea of equality is a regulatory principle to which children adhere (J. Youniss 1980), although the social reality of children's interaction often contradicts these desires for respectful treatment. Again and again vigorous or manipulating children try to use the others for their own ends only. However, children can keep away from these unfair peers and look for others who are willing to regard their point of view and their suggestions. During middle childhood children increasingly participate in peer activities in which it is up to them to find out what is liked by whom and whose proposals are accepted. In order to safeguard the continuation of children's social interactions again and again the differences of views and intentions have to be negotiated.

Numerous studies have demonstrated that the exchange of opinions and arguments between children promotes their social development (J. Smollar/J. Youniss 1982), their cognitive competencies (W. Doise 1985; G. Mugny et al. 1984), their moral judgement (W. Damon/M. Killen 1982; T. J. Berndt 1984), and their maturity of resolving social issues (J. Nelson/

F. E. Aboud 1985), even if none of the partners possesses the correct answer or the adequate capacity in advance (M. Glachan/P. Light 1982). Usually, the data of these studies are analyzed with regard of the differences in developmental progress associated with peers' joint efforts to solve a problem as opposed to the effects of adult interventions into the problem solving process. Only in a few studies data were collected in order to investigate the behavioral devices by which the children achieve correct results or improved competencies.

Above all studies concerned with the promotion of moral behavior analyzed the communication processes in which higher level solutions are worked out by the discussants. In these studies a variety of argumentation features in sociomoral discussions was identified which provide for different patterns of dealing with incompatible reasoning. Several developmental models placing these communicative and interactional behaviors in a hierarchical order were proposed (M. W. Berkowitz/J. C. Gibbs 1983; M. Berkowitz/F. Oser/W. Althof, in press; M. Miller 1984; F. Oser 1981). Also S. Powers (1982) distinguished a number of behaviors applied in argumentations. Not all of them represent steps to a constructive solution of the problem under discussion as for instance "distracting" or "devalue/hostility". R. L. Selman/A. P. Demorest (1984) opposed self- and other-transforming negotiation strategies which are ordered on four stages beginning with physical dominance and submission and leading to cooperatively elaborated solutions reflecting the interests of both parties. This developmental model relies on Selman's concept of a stage by stage progressing coordination of children's differing perspectives (R. L. Selman 1980), while the model of M. Keller/S. Reuss (1985) refers to an idealized sociomoral discourse in order to assess levels of reasoning and of strategies when children attempt to solve a friendship dilemma.

According to many studies, negotiation strategies applied by children are connected with their sociometric status and their

integration into peer relationships. The association is best confirmed for higher rates of physical aggression demonstrated by children who are disliked (K. A. Dodge 1983). Popular children from grade 3 through 7 achieved higher scores on compromising skills than less liked children; however, neglected children showed relatively higher scores in their answer to a conflict story than rejected and average children (L. A. Kurdek/R. Lillie 1985). Highly appreciated children from grade 1 and 2 engage less in conflicts than other children. The conflicts in which they participate tend to be more frequently conflicts about interpersonal influence and more seldom object related conflicts (C. U. Shantz/D. W. Shantz 1985). Older children and children with high sociometric status take into account the maintenance of a good relationship when confronted with a hypothetical interpersonal problem (P. D. Renshaw/ S. T. Asher 1983). J. Nelson and F. E. Aboud (1985) found that in a dispute especially friends influence each other in a way leading to a more mature solution of a social issue.

We conclude from these investigations that children in conflicts use different behavioral procedures in order to solve or put an end to controversies either in agreement or in dissent. We conceive of these behavioral procedures as negotiation strategies. By the concept of a strategy we want to stress the goal oriented nature of these behaviors. They aim at a state of settlement which benefits the user of the strategy or both negotiators. The reported results suggest further research about the factors connected with the selection of different strategies by negotiating children, since the performance of a strategy does not depend alone on the achieved level of discourse competencies or of sociocognitive coordination of perspectives. We suppose (1) that children apply strategies of different qualities (2) with regard to the domain of negotiation, especially to the normative frame of the controversial topic. We further suppose, that (3) the domain of negotiation and the quality of the strategy are related to the outcome of the negotiation. Finally, we assume that the manifestation of

domains of negotiation, of the strategies applied by the children, and of the solutions achieved by the negotiation, and the associations between these variables vary (4) across gender and (5) age and are (6) influenced by the quality of the social relationship existing between the negotiating children.

For the purpose of this presentation the qualities of the two first steps of a negotiation and their connection to domain and solutions are analyzed. This was decided in favor of better comparability since about a quarter of the negotiations was solved or ended after the first reaction of the addressed child. Beyond this pragmatic perspective it was observed that in most negotiations the "definition of the situation" (W. I. Thomas) is persistently determined by initiation and reply, and, therefore, these first steps warrant special attention.

2. Method

Non-standardized observations of children's negotiations in natural settings were regarded as the most appropriate procedur for collecting data which should contain a rich variety of strategies applied by friends and non-friends dealing in an unrestricted manner with problems differing by domain and normative frame. The data are part of a combined cross-sectional and longitudinal study of children's peer interactions from the ages of 6 to 12 conducted in an inner city elementary school. Here we report on the analyses of peer negotiations observed during two periods of data collection in one classroom. Thirty-four children, 18 girls and 16 boys, attended the classroom during the first period of observations on grade 4 (average age 9; 10), 31 children, 20 girls and 11 boys, during the second period on grade 6 (average age 11; 10). Six children of grade 4 left the classroom before the follow-up study on grade 6, and 3 children were observed only on grade 6.

Interactions of children were observed mainly within the rooms of the class, but also during breaks, on playgrounds, and at sports events or excursions. Usually two observers focused during a predetermined time on two children sitting next to each other. The observers exchanged places for another term of observation. Hence, the field notes written down in the situation and elaborated immediatly after the actual observation mostly report the same interactions from two different perspectives and, thereby, make possible mutual complement and control. Following the methods of data collection established in the symbolic-interactionist tradition (B. G. Glaser/ A. L. Strauss 1967) no prefixed coding scheme was used. The observers had to write down each observed interaction sequence and its concomitant circumstances as completely as possible. During the second observation period the conversations of the focal children were tape recorded as well.

The observations continued for some months until the field notes covered at least three hours of observation for each child. Our efforts to provide for an equal temporal amount of observations were not successful in consequence of the normal unsteadiness of classroom life. The observers often talked with the children who sometimes gave additional information about issues and behaviors. After the end of each observation period semi-structured interviews were conducted with all children (one refusal on grade 6) investigating the children's friendships, their joint activities, and their experiences with conflicts and endeavors to solve them.

The aims of the study were explained to the children in detail. The observers assured the children not to "tell tales" to teachers or parents and strictly kept to the promise. Other experts of the social life of elementary school children in Germany confirmed that the recorded behaviors look to be typical and uninhibited.

All negotiations among children were selected from the file containing all observed interaction sequences in order to form a subfile "Negotiation" being at disposal for qualitative analyses supported by the software package QUALITAS (K. U. Süβ 1987). An interaction sequence was categorized as a "negotiation" if a dissent emerged between at least two children and led to a controversy actively carried on by both parties. The initiator explicitly or implicitly introduced the issue of the negotiation or generated the controversial issue by an action which intentionally interfered with the interests of others. The replying child expressed his or her position either explicitly or implicitly, the latter often by ignoring. When the addressed child followed the demands of the initiator without any resistance the interaction was not categorized as a negotiation. For the purpose of the analyses presented here we omitted those interactions which were recorded by general descriptions only as for instance "the children arranged a meeting in the afternoon", since the individual behaviors of the negotiators were not circumscribed. For the same reason negotiations were excluded from the subfile if the field notes do not indicate the initiator of a negotiation. Thus, we base our analyses on 355 completely depicted negotiation sequences, 164 negotiations among 34 children of the classroom on grade 4, and 191 negotiation sequences of the same quality of description among 31 children of the same classroom on grade 6. Thirty-four percent of these negotiations took place among boys, 30 percent among girls, and 36 percent were negotiations with participants from both genders.

3. Variables and measures

The following variables were defined and used in order to categorize the qualities of the observed negotiations:

Variables related to the participating children: Besides age and gender of the participating children it was coded for every

negotiation who initiated the negotiation and who firstly reacted to the introductory step. With regard to social relationships between children the friendship status was identified by categorizing children's dyads as "best friends", "friends", and "nonfriends" based on the friendship interviews. A modified version of a previously described coding procedure was used (H. Oswald/L. Krappmann 1984; Chr. Fricke et al. 1987). The reliability of the friendship assessment was controlled for the assignment of the grade 4 children to the relationship categories and turned out to be satisfactory (interrater agreement: 93 percent; kappa =.88).

Insert table 1 here

Variables related to the domain of the negotiations: Objectives of the negotiations were distinguished according to the frame giving meaning to the negotiated issues. We use the concept of a frame in order to indicate that the objective of a negotiation (like every object of human action and thinking) is socially marked (E. Goffman 1974). With regard to negotiations it is important to specify into which commonly accepted norms and regulations the objective is embedded.

The objectives of the observed negotiations have been assigned to the four frames "severely normative", "moderately conventional", "unrestricted", and "playful and experimental" (cf. table 1).

- "Severely normative" was adopted as frame in all negotiations in which personal rights, bodily entirety, rules of the school, orders of authorities were alluded. Attempts to bother and their rejection were included in this category.

- Objectives were regarded as "moderately conventional" when a regulation was touched upon which does not prescribe rights and duties in a strict way as for instance in the case of

requested help. Children, especially friends, accept as a rule that they should help each other. However, it is an objective of free negotiation whether they really help and which kind of help they offer. Besides negotiations about helping cooperative search for a solution to a task given by the teacher and disputes about children's own rules (like not to "tell tales" or not to brag) were assigned to this category.

- The frame of the objective was considered as "unrestricted" if the settlement of a problem was not restrained by general regulations and, therefore, can be developped by the negotiators in their own way. Objectives belonging to this category, for instance, are discussions about opinions, requests for a sip from the other's Coke, or the proposal of a game.

- Negotiations which are elements of a game, the joint invention of a joyous play, or fooling around were categorized as "playful and experimental". In play and fooling around often behaviors are allowed which at other times are forbidden and vice versa, and it is part of the pleasure to convert normal routines into risky and unconventional behaviors.

The first two categories, "severely normative" and "moderately conventional", refer to a more general regulation to be taken into account while the other two coincide in allowing to establish own terms of negotiation. In some respects the "moderately conventional" frame resembles with the "unrestricted" frame since, in contrast to objectives determined by severe norms, here it is less fixed what ought to happen. In 82 percent of the observed negotiations the initiator and the addressed child referred to the same frame adhering to the objective of their negotiation. In 18 percent of the negotiations the replying child changed the definition of the situation by the use of a different frame.

A peculiar frame is introduced to a negotiation if the first step of the initiator includes the "breaking of a norm". He takes away property, he prevents another child from doing his tasks, or he insults a child. It is obvious that "norm breaking" is closely related to the frame ascribed to an objective of a negotiation because objectives which are normatively or conventionally framed lead into problems which the negotiator may try to solve by breaking a norm. However, almost half the negotiations in the domains framed by norms or conventions began without breaking a norm, and about 10 percent of the negotiations in the two domains of children's free agreements were initiated by breaking a norm. Therefore, it was regarded worthwhile to construct a variable "norm breaking in the first step" vs. "norm breaking not in the first step" in order to investigate the relations of norm breaking to other aspects of the negotiation.

The examination of the reliability accomplished in coding the frame of the objectives under negotiation yielded a satisfactory result for a selected part of the material from both age groups (interrater agreement: 85 percent; kappa = .80).

Variables related to the strategies applied by the negotiating children: The overall quality of the opening strategy of the initiator and of the replication strategy of the addressed child was appointed to three patterns (cf. table 1):

- Pattern 1 "Coercion and manipulation" comprises a variety of behaviors by which the other is treated as an obstacle to the fulfilment of one's goals which has to be brushed aside without respect for the other's wishes or legitimate rights. Also the replying child's reaction was assigned to this category if it submitted himself or herself to the initiator's coercive behavior without stating own expectations or appealing to rights.

- Pattern 2 "Offer and reply" refers to all behaviors considering the other as an opposite with own intentions which he or she should give up in order to adjust himself or herself to the initiator's or to the opponent's intentions. Reasons for demand or rejection are not explained whether the rationale is seen to be evident or not worthwhile to be explicated to the partner.

- Pattern 3 "Reasoning" includes all behaviors by which the initiator or the replying child attempts to give reasons to the other in order that he or she can understand the intentions pursued by the respective negotiator. These behaviors appeal to mutual responsibility for an acceptable solution.

A second strategy variable refers to the characteristic combinations of the opening strategies of the initiator and the addressed child's reaction. Four categories were constructed:

- Both negotiators apply strategies of the patterns 2 and 3.

- The initiator selects a strategy of pattern 1; the replying child answers by a strategy categorized in pattern 2 or 3 demanding respect for his or her intentions or rights.

- The initiator begins by a strategy of pattern 2 or 3; the addressed child chooses a strategy of pattern 1 indicating he or she is not willing to consider the other as a person with whom such a topic could be negotiated.

- Both negotiators try to urge the other in the desired direction by using a strategy of pattern 1.

The variable "combination of strategy patterns" contains the effects of the strategy decisions taken by both negotiators and turned out to possess more explanatory power than the single strategy pattern variables. Therefore, in some of the analyses we concentrated on the "combination of strategy patterns".

The reliability of the coding conducted for the strategy pattern variable was examined for a sufficient portion of the negotiations and proved to be satisfactory with regard to the qualitative nature of the observational data. The interrater agreement on the strategy of the initiator was 90 percent (kappa = .73), on the strategy of the addressed child 77 percent (kappa = .59).

Variables related to the outcomes of the negotiation: The "results" achieved by the negotiators have been distinguished as "solution accepted by both sides" and "unaccepted or no solution" (cf. table 1). The first category comprises solutions which are supported or accepted by both parties, the second includes terminations by an unacceptable step of one of the negotiators against the will of the other or endings without any result achieved by the children.

A second categorization of the outcomes of the negotiations refers to the question whether participants were physically or psychically hurt or humiliated in the process of the negotiation or by the solution. The variable "derogation" contains the categories "at least one participant hurt" and "nobody hurt".

Coding instructions for all variables were spelt out in manuals. All coding was executed by at least two trained coders. Their agreement was tested for a sufficient part of the observations by means of Cohen's unweighted Kappa (J. Asendorpf/ H. G. Wallbott 1979). All cases without agreement were discussed until a congruous categorization was accomplished.

4. Results

4.1 General characterization of the negotiations (cf. table 1)

Domain: Although the observations were conducted in the context of school and teachers' instruction, only about one quarter of the negotiations were influenced by a severe norm or an authoritative demand in the first step of the initiator and in one third of the reactions of the addressed child. About 15 percent of the negotiations were framed in a less restrictive way by a convention. More than half of the negotiations were framed in an unrestricted and playful way by the initiator and/or replying child and could be carried out according to the conceptions and intentions of the children. Breaking of norms occurred in a relatively small portion of the negotiations (only 27 %), mostly in the field of cross-gender interactions.

The differences of the frames applied by boys and girls in same-gender negotiations are of no importance (cf. table 7 in the annex). But in cross-gender negotiations children more often referred to severe norms and more often broke norms, mostly committed by a minority of rambling boys on grade 4. These differences are small to medium ($r = .17$ for the frame of the initiator; $r = .32$ for norm breaking, $p < .001$ in both cases). There is a tendency that children on grade 4 more often referred to a normative frame and more often broke norms than the children on grade 6 ($r = .21$, $r = .30$, $p < .001$ in both cases). These differences between the two age groups diminish when same-gender negotiations are compared ($r = .13$, $p < .05$; $r = .20$, $p < .01$).

Strategy: Strategies of pattern 1 "coercion and manipulation", by which the other is treated as an obstacle without respect for his or her demands or rights were applied in almost one third of the initiations and in almost half of the responses of the addressed child. In 54 percent of all negotiations a coercive, disrespectful strategy was applied at least from one of

the participants. Strategies of pattern 2 "offer and reply" by which the other is regarded as an opponent who is asked to adjust himsef or herself to own intentions, were applied most frequently in the first step (67 %) and were nearly as frequent as strategies of pattern 1 in the replication (43 %). "Reasoning" strategies occurred astonishingly seldom in the negotiations of children from both age groups observed in natural settings. Only in 12 percent of all negotiations either the initiator or the addressed child used a pattern 3 strategy. Only two out of all 355 observed negotiations were begun by a strategy of pattern 3 from both sides. 43 percent of the initiations in which strategies of pattern 2 or 3 were used, were replied by a strategy of pattern 1 expressing that the initiator or his/her intentions were not respected and worth for a considerate reply.

As in the case of the domain variables the differences in the strategy pattern applied by boys and girls in same-gender negotiations are neglectable (cf. table 7 in the annex). However, in cross-gender negotiations, children used more strategies of pattern 1. This difference is small, too, and due to the three mentioned rambling boys on grade 4 only who started their negotiations with girls by strategies of pattern 1 and provoked replications by the addressed girls applying strategies of pattern 1 as well. Yet the advancements of these boys often were replicated from the side of girls by means of a strategy of pattern 1 even if the boys approached the girls decently using a strategy of pattern 2. On grade 6 the children used more strategies of pattern 2 "offer and reply" than the fourth-graders, but these age differences vanish when we consider same-gender negotiations only.

Outcome: Solutions which were supported or accepted by both parties were achieved only in about half of the negotiations. All other negotiations were either terminated by one child forcing the other without consent, by a confrontation or remained without a result. It is a characteristic feature of the

observed negotiations that in the progress or by the solution of 45 percent of the negotiations the feelings or self images of one or both participants were physically or psychically hurt even if finally an accepted solution was worked out.

A small gender difference emerges in same-gender negotiations since girls more often found a solution which both participants supported or accepted ($r = .17$, $p < .01$), but there is no difference with respect to derogation (cf. table 7 in the annex). Slightly more derogations occurred in cross-gender negotiations ($r = .20$, $p < .001$), mostly initiated by the rambling boys. But, interestingly enough, boys and girls are hurt nearly to the same extent. The sixthgraders more often found an acceptable solution and avoided derogations than the children on grade 4 ($r = .24$, $r = .26$; $p < .001$ in both cases). These age differences become smaller when we look to same-gender negotiations only.

Friendship: Since children are friends with some of their classmates only we have to expect that they are negotiating not exclusively among friends. Actually, only 18 percent of all observed negotiations took place between best friends, additional 23 percent between friends, and 59 percent between children who are not friends. According to our data girls were negotiating with friends to a greater extent than boys. Seventy percent of the same-gender negotiations of girls occurred between best friends or friends as compared with 41 percent of the same-gender negotiations of boys ($r = .29$, $p < .001$). The proportion of negotiations with best friends increased with age for both genders.

Insert table 2 here

4.2 Domain, strategy patterns, and outcomes of the negotiations

The domain of the negotiations proves to be related to the selection of strategies from different patterns and to the outcomes of the negotiations. Even higher correlations emerge between strategy patterns and outcome variables.

Domain and strategy pattern (cf. table 2): The frame attributed to the objective under negotiation by the initiator is associated with the pattern of the initiator's opening strategy ($r = .46$; $p < .001$) and with the pattern of the strategy by which the addressed child reacts to the initiation ($r = .39$; $p < .001$). These correlations are due to the fact that objectives framed as "severely normative" were frequently introduced by means of a strategy of the pattern 1 "coercion and manipulation" while objectives framed as "unrestricted", or "playful and experimental" in more than three quarters of the respective negotiations led to the use of a strategy of pattern 2 or 3 "offer and reply" or "reasoning". This description applies to the correlation between the frame attributed to the objective by the initiator and the strategy pattern of the replying child, too, except for the objectives framed as "moderately conventional" since more than half of the requests for help allotted to this category were articulated by a strategy of pattern 2, but rejected by use of a strategy of pattern 1 (L. Krappmann/H. Oswald 1986; 1987). Likewise the frame adopted by the addressed child is connected with the strategy pattern the child chooses in order to reply ($r = .48$; $p < .001$).

The breaking of a norm by the initiator in the opening of a negotiation is clearly related to the selection of a strategy by the initiator ($r = .53$; $p < .001$) and by the reacting child ($r = .36$; $p < .001$). Norm breaking behavior overwhelmingly was committed and rejected by applying strategies of the pattern 1 "coercion and manipulation".

These correlations between domain and strategies variables applied by the children appear even clearer if we look to the connections between the framing of the objective of the negotiation by the initiator or the replying child and the different combinations of strategies patterns (cf. table 2 last row).

The correlation of the domain variables with the combination of pattern variable was controlled for age, gender in same-gender negotiations, and for same-gender vs. cross-gender negotiations. The coefficients turned out to be significant in all subgroups. However, the relations are highest in cross-gender negotiations (up to .74, $p < .001$) and lowest in same-gender negotiations of girls (down to .27 $p < .01$). This result reflects the firm connection between the adoption of a normative frame or the breaking of a norm by the initiating boy in the cross-gender negotiations, the selection of a strategy of pattern 1 by the boy, and the immediate and often harsh rejection of the attacked girl. In contrast, there was much more variety in combining frames and strategy patterns in same-gender negotiations, especially in girl-girl negotiations, where the adoption of a normative frame was not combined with the selection of a strategy of pattern 1 in the same extent.

Insert table 3 here

Domain and outcomes (cf. Table 3): There exist clear correlations between domain variables and the outcomes of the negotiations which emerge from the connection of the "result" with the frame attributed by the initiator ($r = .30$; $p < .001$), with the frame attributed by the replying child ($r = .36$; $p < .001$), and with the breaking of a norm in the initiator's first step ($r = .34$; $p < .001$). The correlations between the framing of both the initiator and the replying child and the breaking of a norm on the one hand and the "derogation" of a participant on the other are even higher ($r = .48, .52, .51$; $p < .001$). These correlations result from the fact that in less restricted do-

mains of negotiation more often an acceptable solution was achieved and more seldom a participant was hurt. The observations also demonstrate that the breaking of a norm very frequently was followed by unacceptable termination and by the derogation of one negotiator or both.

The correlations between domain variables and the variable "result" was controlled for age, sex in same-gender negotiations, and for same-gender vs. cross-gender negotiations. The correlation coefficients are highest for cross-gender negotiations, small for negotiations on grade 6, and insignificant for girl-girl negotiations. These figures indicate that sixth-graders and girls were better able to come to an acceptable solution than fourthgraders or boys if the objective was framed as "severely normative" or a norm was broken at the onset of a negotiation.

Strategy patterns and outcomes: The correlations between strategy and outcome variables are higher than those between domain and outcome variables (cf. table 3). They reach notable magnitude for the connections of the variable "combination of strategy patterns" with the variables "result" and "derogation" ($r = .54$ and $r = .64$; $p < .001$).

Insert table 4 here

Table 4 shows that an accepted solution was worked out in 85 percent of the negotiations opened from both sides by a strategy of pattern 2 or 3 and that in the same case nobody was hurt in 92 percent of the negotiations while the combination of strategies selected from pattern 1 produced the opposite outcomes in the overwhelming majority of these negotiations.

Again these relations are highest for cross-gender negotiations ($r = .61$ and $.71$; $p < .001$). They are also high and very similar for boys and girls in same-sex negotiations ($r = .48$ to $.60$;

p <.001) and for the negotiations in both age groups (r = .49 to .68; p <.001).

4.3 Negotiations and friendship

In order to examine the assumption that social relationships influence the behavior we firstly analyze the association of friendship status with the eight negotiation variables. Secondly, we examine, whether friendship as a controlling variable changes the correlations between domain, strategy, and outcome variables reported above.

Insert table 5 here

Friendship and negotiation variables: Friendship and the negotiation variables are moderately related only. The correlations become significant solely for boy-boy negotiations. Since there exist no best friend relationships over the border between the genders in our sample of ten to twelve year old children (H. Oswald et al. 1987) we analyze the influence of friendship in same-gender negotiations only (cf. table 5).

The analyses reveal that there is a tendency that nonfriends more often broke norms, more often used strategies of pattern 1 "coercion and manipulation", and less frequently applied patterns and combinations of patterns which are associated with more satisfying results according to our reported analysis. Over two thirds of the negotiations between best friends and friends led to an accepted solution as compared to one third of accepted solutions in the negotiations among nonfriends (p <.001 for best friends and friends vs. nonfriends). And only less than a quarter of the negotiations among best friends and friends are hurtful as compared to nearly half of the negotiations among nonfriends (p <.01 for best friends and friends vs. nonfriends).

These results show, that in boys' same-gender negotiations the statistical risk of getting hurt and missing a solution is much higher among nonfriends than among friends. However, the correlation coefficients presented in table 5 are not too impressive, and no significant statistical associations become visible for girls.

Insert table 6 here

Friendship as a controlling variable for the relations between domain, strategy, and outcome: As shown in table 2 we disclosed rather strong associations between domain variables and strategies chosen by both initiator and replicator for all negotiations, and this result holds true for girls and boys and for both grades. This association evanesces, however, for best friends (cf. table 6) indicating that best friends are not dependent in the same manner as nonfriends on the usual associations between domain and strategy variables.

A similar pattern emerged with regard to the relation of the domain and the result achieved in the negotiations. Again, best friends were less determined by the usual association, but were able to find solutions even if the beginning of a negotiation was framed as "severely normative". The correlation between the combination of strategy patterns and the result of negotiations is not modified in the same extent by the friendship status. However, the differences of the correlations obtained for best friends, friends and nonfriends are clearly distinct and altogether point in the same direction (cf. table 6). The coefficients for the associations between domain and strategy variables on the one hand and the derogation variable on the other are high for nonfriends, but only medium for best friends.

5. Discussion

The results of our analyses of children's negotiations in natural settings admonish the researchers who are looking for developmental incentives in the social world of childhood, not to portray children's interactions in a romantic manner. Indeed, our field notes contain many friendly episodes among children sharing toys, giving assistance, or cheering up each other. A lot of the observed negotiations also were of an unproblematic character. However, there is no denying the fact that in many interactions children proceeded in a very inconsiderate and violent way. It is true that many children applying these unkind and unreflecting behaviors often fail to realize their intentions. But quite a few children surrender to the fierce trouble-makers or pay back in the same coin. Thus, we observed many negotiations which seemed to be immature and without any stimulation for the promotion of competencies. Sometimes it appeared absolutely unbelievable that the "interiorisation" of the observed behavioral patterns could contribute to the generation of psychological structures establishing the capacities to solve multifaceted problems in a considerate manner. Can we concieve of the social world of children as a place where the children do get more than a rough kind of "education for life" (H. S. Sullivan 1953)?

Further qualitative examinations of the observed negotiations are teaching us that many of the harsh and pungent initiations and replications are well understandable. There were several objectives which really do not deserve of a more elaborate presentation than by a strategy of pattern 2 "offer and reply". There were requests and proposals which correctly are interpreted as mere imputations and, therefore, comprehensibly were responded by a strategy of pattern 1 "coercion and manipulation" excluding the other from an interaction of which he is not prepared to keep the rules. And there were children occupied with self-oriented motives who treated their classmates as means or obstacles in the pursuit of their intentions. One way

to get rid of this kind of treatment are resolute strategies of pattern 1 by which the intruder is pushed back.

But even if the character of many of these asymmetric and disrespectful interaction sequences is well understandable by its nature, we have to admit that a majority of the negotiations does not seem to offer challenges inviting the negotiators to take the perspective of the other, to analyse a controversial issue from different sides, to explain reasons, to protect feelings and self-images, and to develop mutual responsibility. Anyhow, there were instances among the observed negotiation in which children demonstrated these behaviors in greater extent. Which conditions nourish the performances of more elaborate negotiations and of more satisfying solutions which better integrate the intentions of both children and respect their feeling with more care?

Our results suggest that negotiations among best friends follow another set of rules than negotiations among less friendly related children. They "deviate" from the overall tendencies which reflect that normatively framed objectives and coercive and manipulatory strategies in the beginning of a negotiation predominantly push the negotiators to an unacceptable termination of the negotiation and often cause humiliation. Most of the respective correlations which are firm for nonfriends, faint away when the negotiators are best friends. Best friends more often chose strategies of pattern 2 and more often found an acceptable solution than nonfriends, even if the frame of the objective was "severely normative" or if the initiator broke a norm. It is true that also best friends derogated if the frame was normative, if the initiator broke a norm or if one or both parties used strategies of the pattern "coercion and manipulation". However, best friends avoided such to a much greater extent. We conclude that best friends try to make the best out of a problematic beginning even under conditions which induce nonfriends to deal with the issue in an insensitive and inconsiderate way.

The reported analyses have demonstrated, however, that being best friends influences the negotiations in the described way in boys' same-gender negotiations only. It is among boys, that friends were more respectful for the intentions of others, more often reached an acceptable solution, and more often avoided derogations than nonfriends. Girls, differently than boys, treated their female nonfriends in the same manner as friends. How can we explain this astonishing dissimilarity?

In general, the differences between the negotiating behaviors of boys and girls were small. In same-gender negotiations boys tended to use a strategy of the pattern 1 "coercion and manipulation" slightly more often than girls, and girls tended to find an acceptable solution somewhat more often than boys. This is due to the girls' capability to achieve an acceptable solution in girl-girl negotiations even though the objective is framed as "severely normative". This means that girls of these age groups produced behaviors in all same-gender negotiations which boys demonstrated in negotiations among best friends only.

We suppose that this difference is a consequence of the fact that among girls the objectives of negotiations more often originated from the context of school, among boys more often from the children's social world. In comparison to the free options prevalent in the children's social world, the context of school favors that negotiators proceed in a more considerate way and overcome forceful actions and reactions. Actually, girls did select more strategies from pattern 2 and 3 and did find more acceptable solutions to normative objectives originating in the context of school than boys. May be, school is more important to girls than to boys and, therefore, obscures the effects of friendship. For the school-oriented girls, the way leading out of the pitfalls of negotiations has already been paved by the school's expectations before girls' friendships can exert their moderating effects.

The reported results give hints at another story contained in our observations: the special character of cross-gender negotiations. A lot of cross-gender negotiations were very similar to same-gender negotiations with respect to the correlations disclosed by our analyses. But a couple of rambling and bullying boys on grade 4 very often started cross-gender interactions by bothering and consequently very often got a reply by ignoring or sanctioning. Thus, the frame of these negotiations more often was "severely normative", more often norms were broken, more often the strategies applied by both boys and girls disregarded the intentions of the other side, and more often the result was a harsh termination and hurting. In the progress of these negotiations boys were derogated as often as girls. These behaviors disappeared on grade 6. We have to admit that these unkind cross-gender negotiations are part of the children's life in classrooms. But they are a small part only, and they are replaced by some kind of beginning flirtations in the older age group.

Since three rambling boys left the classroom before the follow-up on grade 6, the negotiations among the older children lost some vivid aspects. On grade 4, these boys very often were negotiating objectives near to the border between bothering and joke, creative nonsense and norm breaking. Their exit fundamentally changed the quality of social life in the classroom because these boys did not only directly influence the negotiations in which they participated, but we suppose that they were responsible for objectives, strategies, and outcomes in an indirect way, too. Therefore, we gave up the plan to control for age by comparing the behaviors of those children only who belonged to the classroom at both periods of data collection.

Anyhow, as reported above, there exist some age effects which indicate that the children on grade 6 less frequently referred to a normative frame of the objective, broke norms, applied strategies of pattern 1 "coercion and manipulation" and more

often achieved accepted solutions and avoided derogations than children on grade 4. Although these age differences are influenced by the range of behaviors elicited by the rambling boys on grade 4, we understand the observed tendencies as an indication that the children of the older age group make more use of their competencies to change perspectives, to reflect their proceedings, and to give reasons for their behaviors.

But obviously the children's negotiation behaviors in natural settings are not only dependent on their sociocognitive competencies. The domain of the negotiations exerts a strong influence because the decision taken on the frame of the objective guides the selection of the strategy and opens or closes ways to solutions. Also the selection of strategies in itself contributes to an accepted solution and to the avoidance of derogation. Since domains and strategies seem to be shaped by contexts, a way becomes apparent how children's behavior is influenced by their integration into everyday social processes.

At least for boys, the analyses support the assumption that friendship is such a context. It has to be the task of future research to look for domains of negotiations in which the influence of friendship on behaviors might become visible for girls, too. Why do friends, at least among boys, negotiate in another way than nonfriends? Intentions, behavioral decisions, and efforts are not only determined by the actual interaction, but they are embedded into enduring meaning systems. One of these enduring meaning systems is friendship (and another is incorporated in the school). Friendship is supposed to influence negotiators because they share preferences and knowledge. But it may be even more essential that friendship generates a long-termed frame of references which urges to reflect the actual negotiation under several perspectives. What will my friend think of me when I am behaving this way? How will this negotiation influence our lasting relationship? Can the outcome of today be compensated for in the long run? It is no contradiction that we observed negotiations also among friends in

which no reflection, reasoning, or considerateness came in sight. Friendship makes possible to use even unfavorable occurrences for development because the more or less satisfactorily settled negotiation remains part of ongoing joint experiences. In a sense an inadequately solved negotiation can be revised again and again in order to step by stepadjust the behaviors to the standards inherent in friendships.

So far, the analyses do not allow to decide whether domain and friendship influence negotiation behaviors or whether successful and sensitive negotiation behaviors lead to a different selection of objectives and contributes to the establishment of friendships. Both conceptions make sense and we should be prepared that both directions of influence are effective in the social world of children.

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Table 1: Variables Related to Negotiations

	1. Step N	1. Step %	2. Step N	2. Step %
I. Domain Variables				
1. Frame of Objective				
(1) severely normative	93	26	116	33
(2) moderately conventional	57	16	52	15
(3) unrestricted	113	32	101	29
(4) playful, experimental	92	26	86	24
	355	100	355	101
2. Norm Breaking				
(1) in the first step	96	27		
(2) not in the first step	259	73		
	355	100		
II. Strategy Variables				
3. Strategy Patterns				
(1) coercion and manipulation	104	30	104	48
(2) offer and reply	236	67	152	43
(3) reasoning[1]	13	4	33	9
	353	101	353	100

4. Combination of Strategy Patterns	N	%
(1) initiation: pattern (2) or (3) replication: pattern (2) or (3)	130	37
(2) initiation: pattern (1) replication: pattern (2) or (3)	21	6
(3) initiation: pattern (2) or (3) replication: pattern (1)	106	30
(4) initiation: pattern (1) replication: pattern (1)	95	27
	352	100

1 In all later calculations strategy pattern (2) and (3) are combined.

Table 1 continued

III. Outcome Variables	N	%
5. Result		
(1) accepted solution	184	52
(2) unaccepted or no solution	171	48
	355	100
6. Derogation		
(1) at least one participant hurt	160	45
(2) nobody hurt	193	55
	353	100

Table 2: Correlations (Pearson's R) of Domain Variables with Strategy Variables

Strategy Variables	Domain Variables: frame 1. step	frame 2. step	norm breaking 1. step
pattern 1. step	.46	.37	.53
pattern 2. step	.39	.48	.36
combinations of patterns	.48	.52	.49

Table 3: Correlations (Pearson's R) of Domain and Strategy Variables with Outcome Variables

Outcome Variables	Domain Variables: frame 1.step	frame 2.step	norm breaking 1.step	Strategy Variables: pattern 1.step	pattern 2.step	combination of patterns
result	.30	.36	.34	.39	.49	.54
derogation	.48	.52	.51	.50	.57	.64

All correlations in table 2 and 3 are significant with $p < .001$.

Table 4: Combination of Strategy Patterns by Result and Derogation (in Percent)

Outcome Variables		Combination of Strategy Patterns (1)	(2)	(3)	(4)
result					
accepted by both		85	52	43	18
unaccepted or no solution		15	48	58	82
	%	100	100	101	100
	N	130	21	106	95
derogation					
participant hurt		8	43	52	88
nobody hurt		92	57	48	12
	%	100	100	100	100
	N	129	21	105	95

Table 5: Correlations (Pearson's R) of Negotiation Variables with Friendship in Same-Gender Negotiations Controlled for Gender

Negotiation Variables	Friendship (same-gender) boys	girls
Domain Variables		
frame 1. step	n.s.	n.s.
frame 2. step	n.s.	n.s.
norm breaking 1. step	.18*	n.s.
Strategy Variables		
pattern 1. step	.20*	n.s.
pattern 2. step	.19*	n.s.
combination of pattern	.23**	n.s.
Outcome Variables		
result	.25***	n.s.
derogation	.20*	n.s.

*** p <.001
** p <.01
* p <.05
n.s. = not significant

Table 6: Correlations (Pearson's R) between Domain, Strategy, and Outcome Variables Controlled by Friendship

	Domain Variables			Strategies:
	frame 1.step	frame 2.step	norm-breaking 1.step	Combination of Patterns
Combination of Patterns				
best friends	n.s.	n.s.	.19+	
friends	.49***	.48**	.39**	
no friends	.54***	.59***	.54***	
Result				
best friends	n.s.	n.s.	.22*	.40***
friends	.29**	.26*	n.s.	.53***
no friends	.34***	.43***	.36***	.53***
Derogation				
best friends	.32**	.37***	.37**	.47***
friends	.39***	.42***	.26**	.53***
no friends	.53***	.59***	.56***	.69***

*** p <.001
** p <.01
* p <.05
+ p <.10
n.s. = not significant

Tables 7: Correlations of Negotiation Variables with Age (grade 4 vs. grade 6), and Gender (same-gender vs. cross-gender; boy-boy vs. girl-girl)

Negotiation Variables	Age grade 4 vs. grade 6	Gender same-gender vs. cross-gender	Gender same-gender boys vs. girls
Domain Variables			
frame 1. step	.21***	.17***	.11*
frame 2. step	.25***	.19***	.09+
norm breaking	.30***	.32***	n.s.
Strategy Variables			
pattern 1. step	.22***	.19***	.12*
pattern 2. step	.19***	.13**	n.s.
combination of patterns	.24***	.18***	n.s.
Outcome Variables			
result	.24***	.12*	.17**
derogation	.26***	.20***	n.s.

*** p <.001
** p <.01
* p <.05
+ p <.10
n.s. = not significant